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Military Order

of the

Loyal Legion

of the

United States

COMMANDERY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

WAR PAPER 55.

Chancellorsville, May 2 and 3, 1863.

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COMMANDERY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

WAR PAPERS.

55

Chancellorsville, May 2 and 3, 1863.

PREPARED BY COMPANION

Captain

WILLIAM R. HILLYER,

U. S. Volunteers,

AND

READ AT THE STATED MEETING OF NOVEMBER 2, 1904.

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Author

PREFACE.

The motive for this paper on the battle of "Chancellorsville" is the vindication of the Third Corps from the unjust criticisms and unfair quotations compiled from the official reports, by James Beale, late of the 12th Mass. Vols., and published under the title:

"Chancellorsville: A paper read before the United Service Club of Philadelphia on Wednesday February 8, 1888."

"Second edition issued in 1892."

Also for the correction of an error in the official reports reflecting upon the men and officers of the Seventh New Jersey, which appears in the report of the Division Commander, General Joseph B. Carr.

Without making any quotations from the paper of Mr. Beale, I will refer to its unjust character in general terms.

He has apparently carefully canvassed the official reports for the sole purpose of gathering together every stricture upon the actions and conduct of individuals and organizations he could find therein, and has collated these censures in such a manner, as to impress the casual reader with the idea that the conduct of the Third Corps from its commander down to the men in the ranks was censurable, and in many cases cowardly and reprehensible.

The injustice of making isolated extracts from reports showing misconduct of individual officers and organizations and presenting them as a reflection upon a whole corps will be apparent to any reader of Mr. Beale's article who, in connection therewith, reads the pages of this paper.

If the paper of Mr. Beale was deemed worthy of publication as an historical document, and it seems to have been so

accepted, I desire to enter my protest against this method of making history, and submit to the military student this vindication of the Third Corps and the Seventh New Jersey Volunteers, by a statement of the facts as gathered from the official records and my personal participation in the events.

I feel assured that when he recalls the fierce charging and countercharging of 25,000 men on one side, and 16,000 on the other, and that in the five hours of bloody unceasing combat, some 14,000 of the 40,000 engaged were either killed wounded or captured and all in the space of a half mile square, he will not wonder that some few of the utterly exhausted fighters, with ammunition expended, in the confusion of retiring marched to the rear.

W. R. Hillyer.

Chancellorsville.

I have chosen the battle of Chancellorsville for my theme for several reasons:

First:—Because my regiment, the 7th New Jersey, accomplished more effective work with less loss than in any other of its 25 or 30 engagements.

Second:—Because some of the fiercest and bloodiest fighting of the war took place on the plank road and at Hazel Grove Angle, between the 3d Corps and William's Division of the 12th Corps on the Union side, and three Divisions of Jackson's Corps of Confederates.

Third:—Because none of the accounts of the battle that I have read has given to the 3d and 12th Corps that measure of credit which they deserve for their heroic sacrifices, and the determined and persistent tenacity they displayed on that occasion.

Fourth:—Because a brilliant campaign of great strategic importance, and auspiciously inaugurated, with every element of success attending its earlier movements, was suddenly changed from offensive to defensive tactics without any explanation, or apparent reason.

Fifth:—Because, though defeated, Hooker's old division never lost confidence in their old commander, "Fighting Joe," and because he never lost confidence in the men and officers of his Division, as shown by his placing them and Kearney's men to stay the onslaught of victorious Confederates and hold them by the throat until his new lines were established and fortified.

No official report of this battle by the Commander of the Army, or explanation of his change of plans from an offensive

to a defensive campaign was ever made; at least none has been published.

The late General Joseph Dickinson, the Adjutant General of Hooker, at that battle, has compiled in chronological sequence the orders issued and despatches sent by Hooker and Lee, during the progress of the movements, showing Hooker's purposes and how carefully every detail of the campaign had been worked out by a masterly strategist and tactician, and how completely mystified Lee apparently was during the first days of the movement.

These orders clearly demonstrate to the military student how absolutely dependent the greatest military genius is upon the skill and loyalty of his lieutenants. They partially clear the mystery of Hooker's change of plans and the beginning of the failure.

The responsibility for Hooker's failure at Chancellorsville is not a part of this paper.

For two years the Army of the Potomac had met defeat in many attempts to respond to the demands of the newspapers of the North: "On to Richmond!"

The first Bull Run, Peninsular Campaign, Second Bull Run, and Fredericksburg had so demoralized and disheartened the loyal people of the North that the failure at Chancellorsville seemed the last straw that would break the back of the War party. It encouraged the Peace party and the Copperheads, and stirred up the opponents of the draft to violence in the cities.

The drooping hopes of the loyal people were two months later fully revived by the glorious news from Meade at Gettysburg, and Grant at Vicksburg.

It is not my purpose to dwell upon the general plan of the Campaign, which is, without doubt, familiar to most of our Companions here to-night, but I must touch upon the movements and outline them with the help of the map.

As Captain of the Color Company of the 7th N. J. Volunteers, and as an active participant in all the fighting on Sunday morning on the plank road west of the Chancellorsville house, I feel justified in attempting to narrate some of the details of that part of the engagement. These incidents have for just forty years been vividly impressed upon a very retentive memory. The pictures of those fearful scenes have never faded, and an account of them, written a few days after our return to camp, published in the Jersey City *Daily Journal*, has always been at my hand to recall the stirring events and prevent their being too hightly colored by the imagination of the garrulous and boastful old soldier as the autumn of life draws on apace.

Let us first glance at the events that immediately preceded the campaign.

When General Burnside on the 12th of December, 1862, made the futile assault on Marye's Heights, he realized what ordinary military intelligence knew beforehand, that it was worse than useless to hurl masses of men at impregnable positions where there could be no other result than slaughter.

Withdrawing to the north bank of the Rappahannock, his army returned to their shelter tents and dugouts, and for nearly a month in midwinter were exposed to the severity of the weather, not being permitted to prepare winter quarters.

Then came the "mud march" in January, another blunder as disastrous as the first because the loss to the army by desertion of brave, but disgusted and disheartened men and good soldiers, far exceeded the losses of the month before in battle.

This projected campaign was upon similar lines followed by Hooker a few months later, but the weather fought against the Army of the Potomac and defeated it, as anybody familiar with Virginia roads in January and February could have foreseen.

Once more soaked with rain, covered with mud from head to foot, dispirited and half frozen, the grand army, after days of struggling to rescue the wagons and artillery from the impassable roads, returned to its boggy camps and settled down for winter quarters.

With busy hands we soon forgot our troubles in the construction of huts and decoration of our camps, which we beautified by arches and bowers of evergreens and fully enjoyed for the next three months.

The authorities at Washington realized that General Burnside was not the strategist to lead the Army of the Potomac to victory, and Major-General Joseph Hooker was placed in command.

Meanwhile Lee had sent Longstreet with two divisions of his corps to Southeast Virginia to operate along the coast.

This left two divisions of the 1st Corps and all of Jackson's 2d Corps to hold the line of the Rappahannock when Hooker commenced his movement:

The Army of the Potomac upwards of 90,000 total strength;

The Army of the Northern Virginia, about 50,000 total strength.

General Hooker's old division to which our Jersey brigade had been attached from its first organization, had implicit confidence in his skill in handling large bodies of men, and we felt that we now had a commander with experience as a tactician, if not as a strategist, who would not be vacillating and dilatory when the foe was within reach.

Three months of resting and drilling, and again we were in motion for the upper fords.

On April 30, with no opposition, five corps of Hooker's Army, the 2d, 3d, 5th, 11th, and 12th, some 60,000 men, were at Chancellorsville on the south side of the Rappahannock river, ten miles west of Fredericksburg, before Lee divined Hooker's intentions.

Meanwhile the demonstrations of the 6th and 1st Corps, under Sedgwick below Fredericksburg, had led Lee to expect the main movement would be to turn his right, cut his communications with Richmond by cutting the railroad which parallels the river for several miles below the city.

These two corps crossed the river with slight opposition, the high bluffs on the north bank affording every facility for covering a movement of this kind, as Lee relates in his official report.

This movement was under the immediate command of Sedgwick, who was ordered to press Lee's rear and form a junction with Hooker.

Reynolds with the first corps was withdrawn and by a forced march of twenty-six miles arrived at United States ford on Sunday morning, and took position on Hooker's right in the new line, and did no more fighting. The total loss of the 1st Corps as officially reported was 292 officers and men.

This was considered by military critics one of Hooker's mistakes, as Reynolds was sadly needed by Sedgwick, and his force was of no use at Chancellorsville. It weakened Sedgwick so that after Hooker's repulse by Jackson, Lee was able to overwhelm him.

The loss of the first corps, above-noted, was mostly incurred below the city of Fredericksburg.

The orders issued by Hooker show that it was his plan that the advance corps should push on towards Fredericksburg as vigorously as possible, driving in the Confederate advance, and securing the most advantageous position possible, and it was his hope that Banks ford might be uncovered and become available as a line of communication with the north bank.

It was when Hooker arrived at Chancellorsville, the day after the army had reached there, and found that his orders had not been carried out, but that the troops had been halted

there, and Lee given time to get his army in position to check any further forward movement, he ordered the withdrawal of Sykes on the old turnpike road, and Griffin on the river road, and established his lines around Chancellorsville and along the plank road to the west to await Lee's attack.

Meade, in his report, states that Griffin reached Decker's house on the river road at a point in sight of Banks ford and found no enemy in position in force.

Sykes met the Confederate advance in force at a point two and a half or three miles beyond Chancellorsville, and not making any connection with Griffin, and the 12th Corps not moving out on the plank road to cover his right, he soon found his wings being enveloped by the superior numbers of Lee, and Hooker ordered a return of all the 5th Corps to his new lines, and that Corps was posted with its extreme left resting on the river at Scott's dam in sight of United States ford.

This withdrawal of the advance of the army from the comparatively open country to which these two divisions had reached, marked the change from the offensive to a defensive campaign.

The densely wooded country around Chancellorsville covered the movements of the enemy, and this retrograde movement uncovered the roads which enabled Jackson to execute his successful flank movement.

This was the beginning of Hooker's failure in the Chancellorsville campaign.

A review of the battle of Chancellorsville would be incomplete if we omitted to call attention to the history of previous campaigns, and study the movements of Stonewall Jackson, and the part he took in them. Without question Stonewall Jackson was the military genius of the Confederacy.

How perfect a counterpart was Jackson's movement upon Hooker's right at Chancellorsville to the turning of McClellan's

Rapidan River
Mine Road
U.S. Ford
Scott's Dam
Road to U.S. Ford
3 Divisions of Jackson's Corps
Ely's Ford Road
5th Corps
Rappahannock River
Scott Ford
Banks Ford
Grifft
Decker House
River Road
Union Camp
Chancellorsville
Plank Road
11th Corps
3rd Corps
2nd Corps
Confederate line
12th Corps
Old Turnpike
Sykes Div.
Fredericksburg
Hazel Grove
Plank Road
Furnace Road
Salem Church
Furnace
Brock Road
Route of Jackson
Catharpin Road
R.R. to Richmond
Sedgwicks Crossing
May 1st. and 2nd.

right in June, 1862, at Richmond; when Jackson with his division by a forced march from the Valley suddenly fell upon the extreme right of the Army of the Potomac in the air at Mechanicsville on the north bank of the Chickahominy, cut its long line of communication and compelled its retreat to the James river.

Then in August marching back to Orange Court House, where Pope with "Headquarters in the Saddle" had advanced south of the Rappahannock to the banks of the Rapidan, and had the long railroad line to Alexandria to protect, Jackson by a forced march around Pope's right fell upon the railroad at Bristow station, where he was met by Hooker with our Division and driven back, and the railroad line kept open. But this movement caused Pope to fall back to Bull Run, where the 2d battle was fought and where Pope was defeated.

Now, once more, when Lee is confronted by the Army of the Potomac and compelled to come out of his defenses at Fredericksburg, it is recorded by the Confederate generals that he sent for Jackson, his trusted lieutenant, who with his corps of four Divisions was miles below the city of Fredericksburg watching the movements of Sedgwick, who had not yet crossed the river. Jackson left Early's Division behind and marched rapidly to Chancellorsville with his three other divisions, arriving the morning of May 1st. The records show how much Lee depended upon the strategic genius of Jackson, and before determining his plan of operations awaited his lieutenant's suggestion.

Jackson again submits to his Commander the old proposal to turn Hooker's right by traversing the roads as shown on the map. Lee assented and left Jackson to execute the movement while he awaited the result.

As stated before, the withdrawal of the 5th Corps, and adoption of the line in front of Chancellorsville uncovered the Furnace and Catharpin roads, which connecting with the

Brock road gave Jackson a route to reach Hooker's right on the plank road beyond the Wilderness Church.

Jackson had marched his three Divisions some twenty miles on the 1st, had formed his plans that night and early on the morning of the 2d, with that wonderful celerity for which his troops had become famous, he traversed the twelve or fifteen miles that placed his three Divisions on the right flank of the 11th Corps "in the air," and wholly unprepared to meet an attack from that direction.

Without waiting to rest his men, the three Divisions in three lines, Rodes,' Colston's and A. P. Hill's, fell upon the unsuspecting Howard with such suddenness and impetuous determination that the rout of the whole corps was most complete and disastrous.

The 25,000 men that composed the three divisions of Jackson were massed in regiments in double column at half distance and moved forward upon the poor little 1st Division of Howard, numbering not over 4,000 all told, and overlapping each brigade that attempted to change front across the road, rolled them up into a confused mass of disorganized and panicstricken fugitives. So close did the Confederates press upon the rear of the fleeing troops that before they could pass to the rear of the brigades awaiting the opportunity to fire, the Confederates were too close to be checked by the fire and the thin line was outflanked, and, brave as officers and men might be (and a large part of the 11th Corps undoubtedly were as brave as any troops in the Army of the Potomac), it was impossible to stand such an overwhelming onslaught.

The responsibility of the rout rests somewhere, but we have no time to dwell further upon that point. Deven's 4,000, which received the first impact, rushed pell-mell through the ranks of Schurz Division, while he and his officers were changing front in the woods across the road. This was scarcely accomplished when they were also overwhelmed and

the one brigade of Steinwehr's Division, 1,400 men, still further to the rear, had been posted as advantageously as possible, and made a determined stand for a few minutes.

This attack on the 11th Corps began at about 6 P. M., and it was perhaps 9 P. M. before the exultant enemy found themselves confronted by troops that would not break or yield. At the first news of the disaster Sickles withdrew his corps from its advanced position at the Furnace and hastily forming his lines in the wood across the plank road, vainly strove to rally the panicstricken officers and men as they rushed through his lines to the rear. Here I will quote from the report of Captain Osborne, Chief of Artillery of the 2d Division, 3d Corps, who was at the Chancellorsville house with three of his batteries proceeding to take position while the 3d Corps was establishing its new line to check Jackson's advance, about half a mile beyond the house. I think this quotation will justify my description of the stampede of the 11th Corps as "a complete and disastrous rout." In Vol. XXV, of Rebellion Records, on page 483, he says, "As we passed General Hooker's headquarters a scene burst upon us which God grant may never again be seen in the Federal Army of the United States. The 11th Corps had been routed and were fleeing to the river like scared sheep. The men and artillery filled the road, its sides, and skirts of the field, and it appeared that no two men of one Company could be found together. Aghast and terror-stricken, heads bare, panting for breath, they pleaded like infants at the mother's breast, that we would let them pass to the rear unhindered. The troops in the old division (Hooker's), unwavering, and the artillery reckless of life and limb, passed through this disorganized mass of men." Remember this was half a mile to the rear of the lines of the 3d Corps, and the terrified men had not yet stopped running. This is but one of several similar accounts in the official reports

Is it any wonder that Hooker should have been disheartened at this appalling disaster? As he watched the thousands of fugitives, as above described, and realized that 10,000 of his troops were worse than useless, can we not feel with him that overwhelming chagrin and distrust of his officers and men and realize the doubts that must have taken possession of the gallant veteran fighter? Does not this, in part, account for Hooker's failure to take advantage of the demoralized and exhausted condition of Jackson's Corps on the afternoon of the 3d and overwhelm it on the flank with his 25,000 fresh troops, the 1st and 5th Corps, which had done no fighting?

The 3d Corps was composed of steadier stuff, and had repelled too many fierce onslaughts of the "Greybacks" to be carried away by any panicky mob of excited men.

Flushed with victory and nerved to the pursuit of the flying thousands, the Confederates pressed on with so little opposition that even the darkness of the night did not check their advance, so confident were they that it was irresistible.

But the 3d Corps had met Jackson's men before and knew that they were not invincible, and that a little pluck and steadiness would quickly overcome the impetuous Southern exaltation and change it to retreat.

And now in the darkness of that Saturday night with the thousands of fugitives pressing through their ranks to the rear, they calmly took their hastily selected lines and met the victors with such a deadly hail of shot and shell that the pursuers themselves were not only completely checked but fell back in confusion.

See General Colston's report, page 1095, of Vol. XXV of the Rebellion Records, and reports of other Confederate officers.

Now while the two armies are "wooing exhausted nature's sweet restorer" for a few hours, and axes of the pioneers are chopping, chopping ceaselessly, and the picks and shovels are aiding in the effort to shelter the brave defenders from

the deadly bullets of the morrow, let us look at the strength of the forces that are to confront each other in desperate guage of battle.

On the Confederate side there lay massed across the plank road about a mile west of Chancellorsville three divisions of Jackson's 2d Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia, consisting of A. P. Hill's Division, 6 Brigades—29 Regts.

D. H. Hill's or Rodes' Division,	5	"	22	"
Trimble's, or Colston's Division,	4	"	20	"
Or a total of,	15	" and	71	"

By a careful estimate, based upon the official reports of the strength of about half of the organizations of the three divisions, it is believed that 350 men to each regiment would be a fair estimate of the average strength of the 71 regiments, making a total of infantry at this point on the Confederate side some 24,850. Of the strength of the artillery there is no full report that I have been able to find, but think from the reports there must have been at least five batteries, with an average of 100 men, 500. Total Confederate strength 25,350, or 25,000 in round numbers. This is a very conservative estimate. On the Union side we have confronting this force, Williams' Division of 12th Corps, 3 Brigades—13 Regts.

3d Corps under Sickles: Birney's 1st Division,	3	"	13	"
Berry's 2d Division,	3	"	17	"
Whipple's 3d Div.	3	"	8	"
	12		51	

And some 6 batteries of artillery.

These 51 regiments did not average over 300 men on the morning of May 3, making a total strength of 15,000 infantry, and 100 men for each battery, 600. Total, 15,600 or say an aggregate strength not over 16,000 as against the 25,000 of the Confederates.

These constituted all the troops that fought the battle of

Chancellorsville, and neither Confederates or Union side had a single regiment to reinforce their lines. The lines of the 5th and 2d Corps, and the 2d Division of 12th Corps were pressed just enough (so General Lee says), to keep them from sending reinforcements to Sickles and Williams. The plank road being the weakest point in the Union lines, Jackson was expected to break through it, and Hooker left Sickles and Williams to hold that point without a single regiment of fresh troops to reinforce or relieve, and these 16,000 men held their position for five long hours, fighting from 5 to 10 A. M. The area occupied by these 40,000 blue and gray veterans in their operations on Sunday morning did not much exceed a half mile square as shown upon the map. The troops were massed on both sides and not strung out in long thin lines, as in ordinary battles. There was no attempt to overlap the flanks on either side.

Hooker, before he sought his blanket for a few hours' rest, had already established a new line, and part of it had already been fortified, and the hastily chosen lines in front of Stuart were to be only temporarily held, to check the Confederate assaults in the morning.

The battle of Chancellorsville was strikingly consistent with many other aggressive campaigns of the Army of the Potomac. The army in July, 1861, was led out by McDowell boldly to attack at Bull Run. The enemy, instead of remaining on the defensive, immediately assumed the offensive. McClellan marched up the Peninsula and sat down in front of Richmond until he was attacked and all of his seven days' battles were on the defensive.

Pope marched down to the Rapidan "with headquarters in the saddle." Without waiting for him to attack, Jackson marched to his rear and the second Bull Run was another defeat for the Army of the Potomac.

Fredericksburg was an exception as was also Antietam.

Now Hooker, with a ringing proclamation to his army that defeat awaited Lee, suddenly changes his offensive campaign to one of defense without any explanation, and again it was defeated.

The losses of the 11th Corps, which did not again confront the enemy, was 2,440, of which 1,050, were reported missing, leaving 1,390 killed and wounded. The Confederate loss was very light, as the opposition to their advance seems to have been confined to a few volleys by the steadiest of the 11th Corps regiments, before they broke and fled. The strength of the 11th Corps was about 10,000, loss about 14%.

And now we come to Sunday morning. The Jersey brigade which had been left at United States ford with Seeley's battery as a guard for the bridges, was at midnight marched to the front to rejoin the Corps, and at 2 A. M. bivouacked for two hours in the rear of the new line established by Sickles. At 4 A. M. we were aroused and moved a few rods to the front, where our division had been placed across the plank road in the edge of the woods. Our regiment was detached and placed in a gap in the first line where no breastworks had been constructed, and there was no material at hand for any defensive barrier.

This gap was in the line of the 1st Division, and about half way from the plank road to the eastern edge of the timber.

The woods were open in front of us, no undergrowth obstructed our view through the forest of large pines. The ground sloped gently up for say 200 yards, and there the sky line was visible between the trees.

We had been here but a short time when just at broad daylight, about 5 A. M., the rebel yells on our right and left told that the struggle had begun.

It will be observed that the salient angle at Hazel Grove farm where Birney's and Williams' Divisions united, was much advanced beyond the lines.

This was an elevated point of cleared land, and the objec-

Jackson's Corps
Sunday morning'
Captured Breastworks
Saturday night.
Furnace
Hazel Grove
Jackson's Monument
7TH N. J. Vols.
Union Sunday morning line
Union
Sunday morning lines'
1ST. Div.
12TH. Corps
3rd. Corps
Brook
Batteries
Plank Road
FAIR VIEW
36 Guns
Union Line
Sunday morning 12TH. Corps
Confederate Line
Saturday and Sunday
Elys Ford Road
CHANCELLORSVILLE
Plank Road
New line fortified Sunday P.M.
Hooker's
to U.S. Ford
To Fredricksburg
2nd Corps
Old Turnpike
River Road
5TH. Corps
May 3rd.

tive point of some of the fiercest assaults of the charging Confederate brigades. It had been occupied by the 3d Corps the night before in the darkness, and it was from this point that Jackson's troops were checked by an enfilading fire as they charged down the plank road in pursuit of the 11th Corps.

General Stuart, the commander of Lee's Cavalry Corps, had been placed in command of Jackson's Corps after the latter and General Hill had been wounded, and on Sunday morning adopted what seemed to us novel tactics for the action in renewing the assualt.

The 71 regiments of Confederates in 15 brigades were full of eager anticipation of another walk-over. They were sent in by brigades, the regiments massed in double columns, and as they advanced some of the regiments moving along the plank road, the others upon the hill at Hazel Grove, a gap was opened between them which is mentioned by a number of the brigade and regimental commanders in their reports, and this gap will be referred to later on.

Practically all the heavy fighting on Sunday morning was at these two points. It seemed to be the purpose of the Confederates to rush upon these points and break through, coming down upon our thin lines on a double quick charge with yells. Lee left Jackson's Corps to finish the task it had begun without reinforcements, while he held the rest of the lines by pressure sufficient to prevent withdrawal.

Hooker intent on getting his new lines established and fortified, left the 3d Corps and 12th to fight it out till exhaustion compelled them to desist.

Not a single regiment was sent to our assistance on the plank road.

Behind our line of battle from the plank road to Hazel Grove hill was an open field sloping down to a brook about 75 yards in our rear, then a steep rise or hill some 75 or 100 feet high

on the brow of which 36 earthworks had been thrown up to cover the guns of our 6 batteries, placed there to support the infantry lines. This was an admirable position (marked on the map as "Fairview"), and enabled the guns to do great execution on the charging masses of the Confederate brigades, both on the plank road and at Hazel Grove on the left. The woods in front made an excellent cover or curtain to shield the artillery from any direct fire of Confederate batteries. The elevation gave a clear range for shot and shell over our heads in the lines below until the Confederates were actually at our breastworks.

The fearful execution in the Confederate brigades is testified to by the official reports of regimental and brigade commanders.

All of these guns had an unobstructed command of both the points of attack.

The Confederate brigades were sent in one after the other in rapid succession. As soon as one was repulsed, another rushed forward, the evident intention being to gradually wear out our men by successive rushes upon these points, and thus the 5 hours were consumed and the endurance of the red stars and the diamonds, as well as their ammunition was at last exhausted. The few rounds of ammunition remaining in some cartridge boxes could not be rammed home in our old smooth bore muskets so foul had they become, and for these reasons at the end we fell back to the Chancellorsville house on the open plain.

It may be of interest at this point to quote from some of the Confederate commanders. All quotations are from Volume XXV, Part I, Official Records of the War of the Rebellion.

General A. P. Hill, commanding the Corps after Jackson, was wounded, in his report found on page 885, says: "The enemy (Sickles' 3d Corps about 10 o'clock at night remember) then made an attempt to retake their rifle pits immediately

fronting Chancellorsville, but were handsomely driven back by Heth's brigade of Virginia troops.

"The enemy during this time had concentrated a most terrific fire of artillery on the head of Hill's Division from 32 pieces of artillery. Hill was disabled by this fire.

"It was thought best not to push the pursuit any farther that night.

"Next morning all the artillery which could be put in position having been brought up, the infantry in 3 lines, Colston's, Heth's, or Hill's and Rodes' Divisions, renewed the attack. The enemy were gallantly charged. The combat was furious. Colston's Division having become somewhat disordered and broken, Heth took the advance."

General Colston, on page 1005, thus describes what Hill alludes to here as "somewhat disordered."

First he mentions the 3d Corps repulse of their advance at 10 o'clock at night in these words. "The troops were hardly reformed and placed in position when the enemy opened about 10 o'clock a furious fire of shot, shell, and canister, sweeping down the plank road and the woods on each side. A number of artillery horses, some of them without drivers, and a great many infantry soldiers belonging to other commands, rushed down the road in wild disorder. But although many casualties occurred at this time in my division, the troops occupied their positions with the utmost steadiness.

"At this time General Nichols of the Louisiana Brigade had his left leg torn off by a shell, and about this time our great and good, and ever to be lamented Corps Commander (Stonewall Jackson), fell under the fire of some of the men of Lane's brigade."

Now we come to his description of the fight and the facts as to the troops that General Hill said were "somewhat disordered." "Early on Sunday morning (May 3), as soon as it was broad daylight, the battle commenced with fury. Our

troops advanced from the breastworks, running perpendicular to the plank road and charged the enemy up the hill (Hazel Grove farm), but were driven back by the enemy (Birney and Williams).

"Colston's brigade under Colonel Williams immediately advanced and became hotly engaged. Colonel Williams was wounded, Colonel Walker succeeded him, but was killed. Lieutenant-Colonel Thurston took command, and being wounded Lieutenant-Colonel Brown assumed command. Colonel McDowell of 1st N. C. was wounded here, and Major Stover killed. By this time the enemy was advancing in very strong force towards the right of our line and the breastworks and were about flanking us on the right.

"This was a critical moment. The troops in the breastworks belonging mainly to Pender's and McGowan's brigades (North and South Carolina troops), were almost without ammunition and had become mixed with each other, and with fragments of other commands. They were huddled up close to the breastwork, 6 and 8 deep. In the meantime the enemy's line was steadily advancing (mark this steadily advancing not in breastworks), on our front and right almost without opposition, until I ordered our troops in the breastworks to open fire."

"Paxton's brigade having moved across the road, advanced towards the breastworks, but before reaching them General Paxton fell, but the brigade advanced and drove the enemy in confusion. It was at and beyond these breastworks that the division sustained its severest loss. For a time the tide of battle fluctuated. The 3 brigades of this division making several distinct charges and being driven back by superior numbers until at last the enemy were compelled to abandon their works near the Chancellorsville house."

General Hill, on page 885, speaks of Rodes' Division coming to the support of Hill, and after tremendous fighting all three

divisions being engaged, the enemy was driven out and his works occupied about 10 o'clock.

General Stuart who succeeded Hill in command of the Corps on page 888 says: "In this hotly contested battle the enemy had strong works on each side of the road, those on the commanding ridge being heavily defended by artillery."

General Heth, on page 891, after describing the repeated charges of the 3 brigades, and their retiring, states, "I cannot conceive of any body of men ever being subjected to a more galling fire than this force. The 3 brigades notwithstanding drove the enemy from his works and held them for some time, but were finally compelled to fall back * * * their right flank was seriously threatened."

"These brigades fell back to the line of works from which they first commenced to advance. Many valuable officers and men were lost in the charge, and especially when falling back." On page 894 the commander of Heth's brigade tells of the charging of his regiments and their being compelled to retire to shelter behind the barricade from which they started, where he states many thousands had taken shelter. "Gathering together the remnants and joined by about 1,200 troops of different brigades, we led the second charge and soon triumphantly mounted their entrenchments, completely routing them from a position from which it is almost impossible to conceive how an army could be driven. Occupying the position about two minutes they were again flanked and forced to retire by greatly superior numbers." How inconsistent this seems that after we are completely routed from such formidable intrenchments, we should return and charge the enemy and drive him out of the stronghold.

General Lane, commanding the North Carolina brigade of 5 regiments, on page 917, says: "I shall always feel proud of the noble bearing of my brigade at the battle of Chancellorsville, the bloodiest in which it has ever taken a part."

On page 918 he says the brigade lost 12 officers killed, 59 wounded, and 1 missing, total 72 officers; 149 men killed, 567 wounded, 121 missing, aggregate loss 909. (This brigade was flanked and routed by the 7th N. J.) Colonel Barbour of the 37th N. C., on page 924 says: "I do not hesitate to say that it was the bloodiest battle I have ever witnessed."

General Rodes, commanding division, on page 944, states: "that the fighting on the center and left was of a most desperate character, and resulted in the loss of many valuable officers." (This was the point held by the 3d Corps across the plank road.)

It will be remembered that Rodes' Division was sent in after the other two had been repulsed and demoralized even to disorganization, and when the exhausted men of the 3d and 12th Corps had been fighting for hours. He also relates thus: "Ramseur after vainly urging the troops in the first line of intrenchments to move forward, obtained permission to pass them." (These troops were the remnants of the brigades that had charged in the earlier hours and by great slaughter and loss of officers had become demoralized as shown by reports already quoted, and were hugging the breastworks captured the night before.)

"Ramseur's brigade, dashing over the works, charged the second intrenched line in the most brilliant style. The struggle at this point was long and obstinate, but the charge on the left of the plank road at this time caused the enemy to give way on his (Ramseur's), left, and this combined with the unflinching determination of Ramseur's men carried the day, and gave him possession of the works. Not being supported, he was exposed to a galling fire from the right with great danger of being flanked." (This fire was by our regiment, the 7th N. J., as will be described later on.) "Notwithstanding repeated efforts made by Ramseur and myself (Rodes) in person, none of the troops in his rear would move up." (This shows

the demoralized condition of the brigades repulsed in earlier charges.)

Several of the regimental commanders also refer to this incident, and Colonel Funk commanding Paxton's Stonewall brigade of Virginia troops after the latter had been killed, on page 1013 says: "At the breastworks thrown up by the enemy we found a large number of men of whom fear had taken the most absolute possession. We endeavored to persuade them to go forward, but all we could say was of but little avail. We moved forward. Here General Paxton fell. We advanced to high ground about the center of the woods where we were hotly engaged about ¾ of an hour." (Now comes the romancing.) He says: "In the meantime the enemy received heavy reinforcements. The brigade unable longer to sustain a conflict so unequal, or to maintain the position without support fell back in *admirable order* (?) to the breastworks where the shattered line was reformed. Under General Stuart's orders we again advanced over the fortifications behind which the demoralized troops formerly mentioned were still crowded and relieved General Ramseur's brigade in our front, who were nobly maintaining their ground with thinned ranks and empty cartridge boxes." What a fairy tale about reinforcements for the Union line! Why was it necessary to fall back several hundred yards to reform his shattered line behind the breastworks, if they retired in admirable order? As I witnessed this brigade break and run, every man for himself, it appears a ludicrous description to say it retired in admirable order

This was one of the brigades our regiment flanked, as described later on.

To close these quotations so graphically describing the efforts of the Confederates to crush in the weakest point on Hooker's line by pounding it with rushes of massed brigades, let me give the report of Rodes, showing how well even at the very last assualts the exhausted remnants of the artillery and

infantry of the 3d and 12th Corps held in check and punished these desperate attempts of Rodes' fresh troops. Rodes' Division was the last to move into action on Sunday morning. Colston's (or Hill's) Division came first, then Trimble's (or Paxton's). Rodes says on page 947, that the strength of his division, 5 brigades, was 678 officers, and 7,873 men. He reports his losses: officers, 230; men, 2,700; total loss, 2,976. Of these were captured by the 3d and 12th Corps, 700.[1] The total losses of the 3 divisions of 15 brigades, or 71 regiments of Jackson's Corps is reported officially, 7,732; and of artillery, 100; a total loss, 7,832, out of 25,000 total engaged, or nearly 33⅓%. This loss, bear in mind, was almost wholly within the little space of half a mile, some of the regiments losing 50%.

Now that you have had from the Confederate officers such vivid pictures of their operations on that bloody field, albeit some of them are highly colored and tinged with romancing, let us turn now to our own lines and see how it came about that 16,000 veterans of the old 3d and 12th Corps were able to practically put out of action 25,000 Confederates on that Sunday morning.

How was it that our troops inflicted upon these charging brigades such fearful losses? If we fled before them and were routed at every charge as they describe, how did they happen to lose from 30 to 50 per cent. of their commands as they report in killed, wounded and prisoners?

Colonel Funk, commander of Paxton's brigade, deftly introduces "heavy reinforcements" as a reason why his brigade fell back in such "admirable order," that they had to get behind the captured Union breastworks to "reform his shattered line." I quote his own language.

The facts are that when this brigade charged down the plank road, the 7th N. J. in the woods and the other regiments of our brigade at the log breastworks, and the artillery poured

such a deadly fire into the flanks and faces of the solid mass, that they broke and ran like sheep, and no reinforcements were sent to the front line that day as I have before stated.

I have already described the position of my regiment, the 7th N. J. in the front line at the opening of the battle in the morning. The balance of the 2d Division of the 3d Corps (the white diamonds) held the front line across the plank road where the heaviest assaults were made, the 1st Brigade a few yards in the rear as a reserve.

It will be seen by the map that the line of breastworks formed an angle on the right of the road where it entered the woods, so that when the Confederates charged a raking fire was poured into their left flank, and that condition is noted in the reports of a number of the regimental Confederate commanders.

While the fierce and stubborn fighting described in preceding pages in the language of the Confederate commanders had been taking place on our right at the plank road, and on our left at Hazel Grove farm for perhaps a couple of hours, no enemy appeared in the front of our regiment, so that what little firing was done by the 7th N. J., was at a right oblique when the charges were made, but it was not effective as we were too far away.

By the topography of the field it came to pass as these brigades started upon that charge, as each of them did from the line of breastworks on the other side of the wood, yelling as they ran, those regiments having Hazel Grove as their objective, bore to the right and became separated from those moving down the plank road. Thus a wide gap of several hundred yards was opened and no troops appeared in front of our position as stated above. A number of Confederate reports mention this fact and show how it left their flanks exposed. The Colonel of the 7th N. J. arranged with the Commander of the regiment on our left to move into the woods simulta-

neously, we deflecting to the right so as to bring us within range of the plank road, and the other regiment bearing off to the left towards Hazel Grove. Each regiment thus covered the rear of the other from any attempt of the enemy to surround them.

We moved forward to the summit of the ridge before described, some 150 yards or more where the ground gently sloped away toward the Confederate lines. Here we halted, but no enemy was in sight though we could see through the open pine forest for some 150 or 200 yards further.

Lieutenant Johnson with two or three men was sent forward to reconnoitre, but returned in a few minutes on a run reporting masses of graybacks in the other edge of the woods, and getting ready for another charge. Soon we heard the familiar yell and in a few moments they came into view in double column at half distance with colors flying.

It was a compact mass of men, a brigade of Virginia troops, and it was a thrilling moment of expectancy and excitement as we wheeled the regiment till parallel to the road and waited till they had passed, which they did, wholly unconscious of our presence on their flank and rear. Our men were cautioned to hold their fire until ordered by the Colonel, and then to aim low as we were on higher ground. At the command "Ready, right oblique! Aim! Fire!" our 300 old smooth bore muskets with buck and ball roared like a sixty-four pounder, and sent a deadly shower of 1,200 shots into the backs of the Virginia graybacks. The surprise was complete, and the execution at short range was fearful.

Believing they were surrounded, they broke and ran pell-mell to the rear without firing a shot. Some 75 or 100 of them jumped behind trees and cried, "Don't shoot," waiving their hands in token of surrender. Our men charged down and gathered them in with two stand of colors, and sent them to the rear under a small guard.

Apparently the object of thus charging in a mass was to break through our thin line by a rush and then deploy, but evidently the officers responsible for these novel tactics did not count on the Yankees appearing on both flanks and staying there. The Rebel yells did not scare the veterans of the 3d Corps.

We immediately reformed the regiment, reloaded our guns and awaited a repetition of the incident. Another yell ringing through the forest announced fresh troops. This was Paxton's (Stonewall) brigade, and they also passed us on the double quick without being aware of the trap we had laid for them. A single volley at short range poured into their backs sent them also on a run to the rear without firing a shot. Another flag and bunch of prisoners was run in, and so far not a man of the 7th had been lost.

This is the charge that Colonel Funk described and relates that heavy reinforcements caused his brigade to retire in admirable order to reform its shattered ranks behind the breastworks.

Whether our regiment could have repeated this successful move or not, Colonel Francine was unwilling to assume the responsibility of leaving his position without orders and risking capture, so ordered "about face," and we marched back to our original position in the edge of the wood, loath to leave so soft a snap. Here we found the place occupied by a red star regiment. Stepping over them we moved about 50 yards further to the rear, at the brook halted, and directed the men to swab out their guns which had become so foul that many could not ram the cartridges home—a common incident with our old smooth bore muskets and the paper cartridges with buck and ball.

Meanwhile the 12th Corps regiment had advanced into the woods and we expected they would serve the next brigade to charge with the same medicine that we had given their predecessors.

In a few minutes while our men were still in the act of cleaning their guns we heard the old familiar yell, and knew that another brigade was coming down the road. This proved to be Ramseur's brigade, and the report of this charge by its commander is found on page 996, of Volume XXV. He reports that when he reached the breastworks he found a portion of Paxton's brigade and Jones' brigade there, but that not a man of them would move when he ordered them to go forward, nor would they move when General Stuart, and corps commander, came up and ordered them to advance. So ordering his brigade to "Forward," they leaped over the breastworks and charged with a shout. Paxton's and Jones' brigades it will be remembered were the two we had routed just before. As they came yelling down the road, and we waited to hear a volley from the 12th Corps regiment that would stop their noisy throats, we were filled with dismay, chagrin and indignation at seeing the whole regiment come rushing out of the woods without firing a shot, every man for himself, and not a shot fired at them. Officers and men of the 7th shouted to the fleeing red stars urging them to stop with us and help repulse the charge, but not a man would halt. They went by us on a dead run and fled up the hill like a scattered flock of sheep.

When the front line of Ramseur's brigade reached our breastworks the men dropped upon their knees and began firing upon the fugitives. It was about 150 yards from where the 7th was in line to the plank road at the breastworks. This was the mistake of Ramseur's men. The halt caused the rear ranks to close up in a solid mass, and every shell from our 36 guns which were fired point blank as fast as they could be loaded, caused a frightful slaughter, and for a few moments we stood and watched the fearful sight.

There were no other Union troops on our side of the plank road, so Lieutenant-Colonel Price, who now had command of

the 7th, ordered us to charge, which we did until we reached a point where our fire would be effective, say about 100 yards, when we opened an enfilading fire into their right flank. At this point for a few moments we received a hot fire, and here nearly all the casualties in the 7th took place in a short space of 15 or 20 minutes. One officer and 5 men killed, 6 officers and 35 men wounded, total 47. This was the lightest loss of any regiment in the brigade.

After firing two or three rounds Colonel Price ordered us to charge, and the Confederates broke and ran—what there was left of them. The space in front of our breastworks was covered a solid mass of their dead and wounded, and many too scared to run away, were captured with two stand of colors. It was a horrible sight. Thus the 7th N. J. at small cost had to its credit a capture of 5 stand of colors, and over 200 prisoners and had put to rout three brigades of the enemy with a loss of some 200 or 300 killed and wounded, and not a shot fired by the regiment from any shelter.

Ramseur reports his total strength 1,509; total losses, 788, more than 50%. Of this loss our regiment gathered in when we charged over the breastworks, 108 prisoners. One of the flags captured was a small silk regimental color, inscribed "2d North Carolina State Troops," with the dates "May 5, 1762, and May 5, 1862," if I remember the dates. As our men jumped over the breastworks, I halted the color guard on our side and stood upon the logs watching the Johnnies running away. Suddenly a couple of guns that had been brought down the road in the rear of the brigade, opened fire upon us with canister, apparently not more than 100 yards away. At the first discharge I saw the flash and felt the wind of the shots as they whirred past my head. A man I did not know of another Company was struck by a shot and his knee shattered as he stood on the log beside me. I called to the men to look out, but they were already scrambling back

to our side. We reformed and marched up the hill to the open plain at the rear of our artillery where General Sewell was gathering the remnants of the brigade together. He reports that he had the colors of all the 6 regiments, but many of the officers and men of the other regiments had become separated in falling back through the woods. Captain Healy, commanding Sewell's regiment, the 5th N. J., and the bulk of the 2d N. Y., had moved off on the opposite side of the road and marched to the rear.

Meanwhile the Confederate batteries finding our infantry withdrawn had advanced, and the shells were falling and bursting around us very lively. In a very short time another Confederate brigade, which from official report appears to have been Paxton's brigade under Colonel Funk, who says he was ordered to relieve Ramseur, who had been compelled to retire, advanced together with remnants of other brigades. Colonel Funk relates: "We again advanced over the fortifications behind which the demoralized troops were still crouched. Seeing some confusion among the enemy who occupied the embrasures on the crest of the hill" (this was the retirement of our 36 guns that fell back as the infantry were withdrawn), he continues "I ordered the brigade to charge which they did with the utmost enthusiasm, driving the enemy from his works, and before them for ¾ of a mile. We took their works. The enemy was driven pell-mell around the Chancellor house." So much for Colonel Funk's imagination. This charge which he describes in such glowing terms, was wholly without opposition as we, the last regiment to leave the front line, had marched to the rear immediately upon the repulse of Ramseur, and were already quietly lying in line in the open field where we saw Funk's (Stonewall) brigade charge up the plank road and deploy behind the artillery embrasures that he mentions, and open fire upon our little remnant of a brigade. General Sewell on his horse waved his sword and called the New Jersey

boys once more to up and at them. Exhausted as we were we did not hesitate, but sprang to our feet and with ringing cheers again rushed across the field, and before we had covered half the distance, the Stonewall brigade broke and ran down the hill and into the woods. Our men gathered in a number of prisoners that crouched behind the emplacements afraid to run, sent a few scattering shots after the fleeing graykacks, as they disappeared in the wood, and then marched back by the flank to the Chancellorsville house, and that ended our part in the battle of Chancellorsville. Our casualties were almost nothing in this last charge, as the Johnnies broke and ran before they had the range of our line. To further illustrate Colonel Funk's delightful faculty for romancing, his description of this last movement will be given as a *rich* specimen of the way military glory is manufactured out of whole cloth.

Colonel Funk and his regimental commanders explain this last retreat by saying that they saw some troops behind the Chancellorsville house moving down to flank them, and as another brigade on their left had fired one volley and ran, leaving their flank uncovered, they were compelled to retire, which, Colonel Funk says, "they did like veterans, the enemy dared not follow." Our brigade moved to the rear of the new lines which had been strongly fortified by those troops not engaged in the fight, and here we for the first time since supper the night before were able to break our fast and rest.

Colonel Funk says one-third of his brigade had fallen. His brigade (the Stonewall) made the last charge on the Confederate side, and the New Jersey brigade the last on the Union side, but there was for a short time after this some sharp fighting as the 12th and 2d Corps lines were withdrawn within the new line.

General Sewell and the Count de Paris describe this last charge of our brigade in commendatory terms, and for his conspicuous gallantry on that occasion General Sewell received

the medal of honor. From these accounts, both Confederate and Union, it will be seen that the claims of the Confederate commanders that we fought in strong fortifications, is refuted by their own words, for they relate that after charging and driving us out of our formidable breastworks, we by counter charges compelled them to retire from these same formidable *works*. The fact is the barricades were scarcely high enough for our kneeling men to rest their guns upon. At the plank road I stepped upon the top log and stood upon it, and our men hopped over it at a single leap.

The strongworks that Stuart declares protected the 36 guns on Fairview Heights, were simple mounds of dirt thrown up in front of each gun, not even sufficient to cover the gunners The emplacements are still to be seen 36 in number, and speak for themselves. I saw them two years ago. All of these "formidable works" were constructed in the darkness of the night before by the tired men after the rout of the 11th Corps, and upon a hastily selected line, to check the pursuit, and consisted of a few logs laid up about knee high.

Now that Hooker had withdrawn within his new line behind the strongworks, Lee seeing that his lines would not be again assailed sent a strong force to assist Early in driving Sedgwick back across the river, which accomplished, the troops returned, and, Lee says in his report, that his preparations for attack were completed, and on the morning of May 6, when his lines advanced, he found that Hooker had retired to the north bank of the Rappahannock. This ended the campaign.

Let us look at the losses of the 3d Corps and Williams' Division of the 12th, and compare them with those of the Confederates already referred to and stated. As stated before, the 71 Confederate regiments with the artillery aggregated about 25,000 men, and the official report of the losses is 7,832 total. On the Union side, as stated before, there was

an aggregate of about 16,000 engaged, 51 regiments and some 6 or 8 batteries, with a total loss officially reported of 5,731—a loss of about 30 to 33⅓% on either side. One man out of every three engaged ought to satisfy men that there was severe fighting in that 5 hours on Sunday morning, May 3, 1863, and when we contemplate that these 40,000 fighting men occupied a space of a few city squares, and some 10 or 12,000 of them fell on the field, we must admit that it was, as many of the Confederate commanders relate, a desperate and bloody battle.

So much for the losses of the two bodies that confronted each other on the plank road and at Hazel Grove farm.

I shall not attempt to detail the operations of either side at other points in the lines, but will refer briefly to the other Corps.

The 2d Division of the 12th Corps occupied the line facing towards Fredericksburg, immediately to the left of Williams. No assaults were made upon any other points than those described, but General Lee in his official report states that he directed a steady pressure all along the line to hold our troops in place. The line as shown by the map, made a right angle at Hazel Grove, so that the 2d Division was subjected to a galling, enfilading fire from artillery and musketry during the entire engagement at Hazel Grove Heights, and its losses were very heavy.

The 16 regiments, about 4,800, lost 1,206, of which 444 were missing, leaving killed and wounded, 762.

The 2d Corps occupying the line on the left of the 12th held the two roads from Fredericksburg, and were on this account more heavily pressed than any other part of the line. The front of the 2d Corps was covered during the whole engagement by a heavy skirmish line under immediate direction of Col. Nelson A. Miles, until he was desperately wounded.

The two divisions, some 30 regiments, or 9,000 men, lost 1,815, of which 720 were reported missing; total killed and wounded, 1,095.

The 5th Corps, occupying the line from the left of the 2d to the river bank, was not confronted on the 2d or 3d by any line of the enemy, and did no fighting or skirmishing, except when Sykes was in the advance on the 30th and 1st. The losses were very light, the 3 divisions, 35 regiments, and 3 batteries numbering 11 or 12,000; total losses, 700, of which were missing 159, killed and wounded 541.

The 1st Corps was not in the fight here.

The 11th Corps I have already reported losses.

It may be a matter of interest to look a little into the losses of particular regiments to see which were more meritorious in their desperate steadiness.

The total losses of the 3d Corps, with a total strength of about 13,500, was 4,119, or just 30%, but there was missing of this number some 1,100 men. This heavy loss in missing is accounted for by the confusion of the night of the 2d when in the darkness the 3d Corps was withdrawn from the furnace, and thrown across the path of the victorious Confederates, there was an inextricable mixing up of the 11th Corps, pursuing Confederates, and 3d Corps regiments, and nearly all the prisoners were taken at this time.

Some of the regiments, like the 7th N. J., suffered very light losses owing to favorable situations, but others like the 5th and the 8th N. J., which regiments held the point at the plank road, lost nearly 40 and 50%. 8th N. J reported 258 muskets in line at commencement of the engagement, lost 125, only 6 of whom were missing, and these 6 were without doubt killed or wounded.

The 5th N. J. reports a total strength of 320; lost, 121.

The 11th N. J. lost 169, which must have been over 50% of its strength though there is no record of the number taken

into the fight. This regiment under its brave old Colonel, Robert McAllister, shows the heaviest loss in killed and wounded of any of the regiments in our division, but it was a gallant fighting regiment because its leader was cool, fearless, and a shining example of what a regimental commander should be to inspire his men with pluck and persistent steadiness. At Gettysburg the 11th N. J. earned fresh laurels for bravery and dogged stubbornness, where it stood its ground on the right of the 3d Corps, on the Emmettsburg pike, until out of a total strength of 275 officers and men, 154 fell, killed and wounded; over 50%. I mention this because General Robert McAllister was worthy of especial mention, and because I saw his gallantry in the Wilderness campaign of 1864, when he commanded our brigade.

In bringing this article to a close I desire to vindicate some of these valiant organizations from unfavorable and erroneous criticisms that have appeared in official reports and historical essays.

I have already pointed out several inaccuracies and imaginary inventions in the reports of the Confederate commanders, and in turning to those of our own commanders, I am impelled to record my correction of a statement that is not true concerning my own regiment, and which if left uncontradicted, would reflect unjustly upon the brave officers and men of that devoted band who held the front to the last.

General Joseph B. Carr, commanding the 2d Division of the 3d Corps, after the death of General Berry, on page 445 of Volume XXV, says: "According to the report of his brigade commander, Col. Louis R. Francine, of the 7th N. J. Vols., left the line without proper authority, and proceeded with about 400 of *his* men to the U. S. ford. At this critical period of the engagement, he could illy be spared and the loss of his men was severely felt. I would respectfully suggest that the Major-General commanding Corps, call for Colonel Francine's explanation regarding his conduct on this occasion."

Here we have, in the official reports, written by the commander of our division in the quiet of the camp, and with all the officers who participated at hand to set him right, this misleading statement which is thus given the stamp of official verification.

As commander of the Color Company of the 7th N. J. Vols., I am in position to declare that Colonel Francine did not take any of his men to the rear. The regiment had but about 300 men for duty that morning, and when Colonel Francine left the regiment, just before we repulsed Ramseur's brigade (our last charge), he turned the command over to Lieutenant-Colonel Price, none of the men went with him. We were in the front line of battle, and remained there with the colors until our ammunition was exhausted, and our muskets so foul we could not load them.

Captain Healy, commanding the 5th N. J., states that when his regiment, after it had exhausted its ammunition, fell back from the plank road, he met Colonel Francine of the 7th taking a party of men to the rear, and learning that he had assumed command of the brigade, he joined him and marched to the ford.

Lieutenant-Colonel Olmstead of the 2d N. Y. also states that he was ordered back to the river by the Assistant Adjutant General of the brigade, where he joined the brigade under Colonel Francine. Colonel Sewell states that he had the colors of all the 6 regiments of the brigade with him at the last charge at the Chancellorsville house, and I know that no part of the 7th N. J. went to the rear. The 5th and 2d N. Y. are the only troops reported by their commanding officers to have gone with Colonel Francine, and the statement of General Carr fixing upon the 7th N. J. the stigma of having deserted its place in the front line, is one of those errors that history should not perpetuate.

I only select this one error because it affects me individually, and can be corrected from my personal knowledge. How many errors occur in other reports, I am not able to say.

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